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ABSTRACT

This volume contains three papers about early library leaders with Boston (Massachusetts) connections. Donald G. Davis, Jr. provides an introduction to the papers. "Justin Winsor, Librarian and Scholar" (Kenneth E. Carpenter) discusses the life of Justin Winsor, who was director of the Boston Public Library (1868-76), president of the American Library Association, and Director of the Harvard University Library (1877-97). "Dewey in Boston: 1876-1883" (Wayne A. Wigand) summarizes Melvil Dewey's career, focusing on his years in Boston. "Referred to the Librarian, with Power To Act: Herbert Putnam and the Boston Public Library" (Jane Aikin) traces the roots of Putnam's achievements as director of the Boston Public Library (1895-99), leading to his appointment as Librarian of Congress. All of the papers contain references. (MES)

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Winsor, Dewey, and Putnam:
The Boston Experience

Papers from the Round Table on Library History session at the Sixty-Seventh Council and General Conference of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, Boston, Massachusetts, August 16–25, 2001

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Introduction

Donald G. Davis, Jr.

Boston has been a focal point for intellectual ferment and library development since its colonial origins and especially a century or so ago. Therefore, Boston was a particularly appropriate venue for the Sixty-Seventh Council and General Conference of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) that gathered there August 16-25, 2001. Following up on an earlier suggestion by Swedish colleague Magnus Torstensson, the IFLA's Round Table on Library History executive committee thought that a program session that focused on significant figures in late nineteenth- early twentieth-century Boston would be of interest to international delegates as well as to an American audience. The decision was an excellent one.

The program that resulted bore the title "The Boston Years of Early Library Professional Leaders" and featured three currently active and recognized library historians. Kenneth E. Carpenter, recently retired from Harvard University Libraries, spoke on Justin Winsor (1831-1897), who was associated with the Boston Public Library and the Harvard University Library. Wayne A. Wiegand, University of Wisconsin—Madison, spoke on Melvil Dewey (1851-1931), who was associated with Amherst College, the Library Bureau, and the secretariat of the American Library Association. Jane Aikin, National Endowment for the Humanities, spoke on Herbert Putnam (1861-1955), who was associated with the Boston Public Library. Though scheduled for early on a Wednesday morning, a crowd of over a hundred listened intently to the well-delivered papers and remained for a question and answer period until the chair had to bring the session to a close because of another program scheduled for the same room. Simultaneous translation into the official IFLA languages brought the papers to non-native English speakers.

The presenters in this session were well qualified to speak on their subjects, each of whom were figures who played important roles in the development of the profession and modern practice of librarianship in its formative

period in the United States. Many have dated the real beginning of that period to the year 1876 which witnessed the founding of the American Library Association, the establishment of *American Library Journal*, and the publication of the U.S. Bureau of Education's special report, *Public Libraries in the United States of America: Their History, Condition and Management.* The speakers were all knowledgeable about their biographical subjects, having published books and articles on them.

Justin Winsor, quite likely the most respected scholar librarian of his day, came to direct the Boston Public Library in 1868 at the age of thirty-seven, following the death of Charles Coffin Jewett. He was a historian of some note, serving as the first president of the American Historical Association. In 1877 he crossed the Charles River to direct the library of Harvard University, a position he filled until his death. Kenneth Carpenter, lifetime library historian with a particular interest in Boston and Harvard, shows how Winsor's dealing with professional issues at the Boston Public Library affected his plans for Harvard and raises some searching questions about his intentions and his achievements.

Melvil Dewey, whose reputation has surpassed any other figure in librarianship, has stimulated legends as well as scholarship. Wayne Wiegand, drawing from his award-winning biography *Irrepressible Reformer* (American Library Association, 1996), summarizes Dewey's career but focuses on his Boston years that began in 1876 and included some of his most adventurous schemes of entrepreneurship in the flowering profession. Among his positions of influence was editor of the *American Library Journal* (soon to be simply *Library Journal*), secretary of the American Library Association, founder of the Library Bureau, and promoter of a number of reform associations, among them metrics and spelling. His move to Columbia College in 1883 began another phase of his career. Wiegand demonstrates the complexity of his subject and suggests the influence of his Boston experience on the rest of his life.

Herbert Putnam, in contrast to Dewey, came to librarianship from law school and was always a library director, first at the Minneapolis Public Library and, finally, at the Library of Congress. Jane Aikin, drawing on her work on Putnam's years at the Library of Congress, traces the roots of his later achievements in his relatively short tenure at the Boston Public Library, 1895-1899. There he continued to develop his mastery of library management skills, administrative style, strategic planning, and fund-raising abilities. Putnam's growing national stature in the profession and his ideas for the expanding role for the Library of Congress ultimately led to his nomination by President William McKinley for the position of Librarian of Congress—a position he held for over forty years.

Together these three figures with Boston connections symbolize the enthusiasm, the energy, and the foresight that characterized the fledgling profession of librarianship in the years spanning 1900. Their Boston experience links these three with various types of libraries and themes in American library history. IFLA delegates who came to hear the presentation of these papers were not disappointed, as the discussion that followed amply demonstrated. The appeal of serious and well-crafted biographical studies of professional figures should not be ignored but noted with enthusiasm. Sharing these papers with a wider audience and in more permanent form will bring similar excitement and pleasure to others.

Justin Winsor, Librarian and Scholar

Kenneth E. Carpenter

Justin Winsor (1831-1897) is not nearly as well known to librarians of the twenty-first century as is Herbert Putnam or, especially, Melvil Dewey. He did not create a classification system. He did not start a major journal in librarianship, he did not establish the first library school and, certainly, controversy does not surround his name. Yet Justin Winsor was the first president of the American Library Association (ALA), and he was not just the first president. He was chosen president again and again, up through the conference of 1885 and then yet once again in 1897. Winsor also headed up, in the course of his career, two of the largest libraries in America. At the Boston Public Library (BPL), he presided over what was, for a time, the largest library on the continent, the library that was at the same time the most accessible in the world. It was the preeminent public library. Then, when he left that library, he presided over the preeminent university library in the United States, at Harvard University, the oldest university in the United States. He was also a successful head of those two institutions, greatly increasing the usefulness of both.

Winsor was also a prominent historian. He edited two major multi-volume histories: *The Memorial History of Boston* (1880-1881) and the *Narrative and Critical History of America* (1886-1889). He chaired in 1884 the meeting that resulted in the formation of the American Historical Association, and in 1886 he was chosen that organization's president. In the 1890s he published other historical works that were based on his cartographical studies.

To his contemporaries, Justin Winsor was probably seen as the most important American librarian of his era. That is not, however, how we see Winsor today. Instead, we see Winsor as an iconic figure, the preeminent exemplar of the scholar-librarian,[1] back when librarians, it is thought, not only read books but wrote them, back during the supposed golden age of librarianship when men (I use "men" deliberately) could equally well have been "captains of industry," steered the destiny of libraries and were es-

teemed (both they and their institutions) far and wide in American society.

In this discussion I will use the example of Winsor to examine the criteria for professional leadership, both within an institution and within librarianship. I will argue that it is Winsor's understanding of libraries and his accomplishments as a librarian at the Boston Public Library, along with his personality, that brought him to the fore of librarianship. And I will point out the irony that what we most remember him for—his being a "scholar-librarian"—resulted from the possibilities for creative librarianship being diminished at Harvard in comparison with the Boston Public Library.

Before looking at Winsor as a librarian, it is necessary to give some idea of his early life.[2] He showed an early interest in the two fields in which he would later excel. While still a student in high school, he wrote and published a history of the town of Duxbury. When he went to Harvard, he lived in the same boarding house as Harvard's librarian, John Langdon Sibley, who had also written a town history. Sibley gave the young Winsor unusual library privileges. He permitted him to enter the alcoves, which meant, in effect, being able to go into the stacks (to use modern terminology) when no one else could, certainly not other undergraduates. Perhaps Sibley also shaped Winsor's interests, for it is recorded that Winsor read Antonio Panizzi's testimony about the British Museum library in a Parliamentary blue book. Even allowing for the fact that interest in libraries was then widespread (a Nicholson Baker was not needed to get some press for libraries), it cannot have been common for Harvard undergraduates to read about libraries.

Winsor's turn to library work was not, however, a direct result of conversation, reading, and library use during his undergraduate years. To become a librarian was not the dream of this son of a well-off Boston merchant shipper. In fact, Winsor did not finish his education at Harvard. He left in his senior year (his departure was not entirely voluntary) for Europe in order to study the languages and literatures of France and Germany. Upon returning home, he sought to have a literary career, writing essays, poetry, and literary criticism, though without particular success, certainly without acquiring fame. By chance, in 1866, having been suggested by a friend, he was asked to serve on the Board of Trustees of the Boston Public Library. He made such a positive impression that the following year, 1867, he was appointed head of the Examining Committee. This committee was a carryover from the tradition in libraries of having an "examining committee" that actually examined the collection annually in order to determine

whether the books were all accounted for. But, at the Boston Public Library, the Examining Committee was expected to report on the operations of the library. Winsor produced a most unusual report. It filled 53 pages of the annual report of the Trustees so that, in length alone, it was impressive. The report also showed an extraordinarily detailed knowledge of the library, and at the same time it was a masterpiece of clear and logical exposition.[3]

Winsor used the technique of asking a series of questions. Thus, under "Building," he asked: What are its main defects? and What is the remedy? Under books, he asked such questions as: Does the record of donations show on the part of the public a sustained interest in the library? Is a due amount of current literature purchased? Under catalogues: Are they well devised, in good order, and well kept up? Under Administration: Is the library conducted so as to be as useful as possible to all classes? Is the library open as much as possible? Under Circulation: Is the circulation satisfactory? What is the character of reading in the Bates Hall? (the non-circulating collection) with the same question being asked of the Lower Hall, where the circulating collection was borrowed. Can anything more be done to guard the books from mutilation and loss? There were more questions, but to list these alone is to show that Winsor raised the important ones for that era. Then, in his answers, he explicitly stated the concerns that the report's readers might have, he appeared to hold nothing back, and he supported his arguments with statistics and information on practices of both the Boston Public Library and other libraries, including ones abroad.

The following year, 1868, Charles Coffin Jewett, the Superintendent of the Boston Public Library, had a stroke and died. Winsor was asked to become "superintendent," the title used for the director of the library. He was obviously the logical choice. Not only well read in several languages, he had also demonstrated that he understood the institution and its purposes. Thus, through a series of chances, the thirty-seven year old Winsor came to occupy what was arguably the most important position in American librarianship.[4]

That Winsor became a librarian as a second career was not unusual for that time. Samuel Swett Green of the Worcester Public Library most closely paralleled Winsor's path in that he too became head librarian at the age of 34 after first becoming a trustee and the author of a report on the library. K. August Linderfelt (age 33, Milwaukee Public Library), Josephus N. Larned (age 41, Buffalo), Henry M. Utley (age 49, Detroit), John Cotton Dana (age 33, Denver), William H. Brett (age 38, Cleveland), and

Henry James Carr (age 37, Grand Rapids)—all also ALA presidents—pursued other careers before becoming librarians. Ainsworth Rand Spofford became Assistant Librarian of Congress at the age of 36 after having been a bookseller and newspaper reporter. Henry Augustus Homes accepted a position at the New York State Library at the age of 42.[5]

Contemporaries well realized that second-career librarianship was common, and there was a stereotype that such people had earlier been failures—presumably, were also failures in librarianship. Winsor himself succumbed to the stercotype: "Let me say that the day is passed when librarianships should be filled with teachers who have failed in discipline, or with clergymen whose only merit is that bronchitis was a demerit in their original calling. The place wants pluck, energy, and a will to find and make a way." Obviously, Winsor was not unusual in being a second-career librarian, and he likewise was not unusual in being one who "found and made a way."

There were, however, individuals whose entire working lives, or nearly so, were spent in librarianship. William Frederick Poole, Charles Ammi Cutter, William Isaac Fletcher, Herbert Putnam, William Coolidge Lane and, of course, Melville Dewey. Frederick M. Crunden might also be counted among that number since he became a librarian before the age of thirty. All of these men were also president of the ALA.

Although Winsor held what may perhaps have been the most important post in American librarianship, why should he have been ALA president for the long span of years from 1876 to 1885? First of all, he was librarian of a public library in 1876. (The move to Harvard was in 1877.) The importance of being a public librarian can be statistically demonstrated—even though the 1876 Report on U.S. libraries showed twice as many membership libraries as public libraries (723 as opposed to 342), and even though the initial supporters of a meeting of librarians had not been primarily public librarians.[6] The Boston Athenæum, The New York Society Library, the New York Mercantile Library, the Apprentices' Library of New York, the Brooklyn Mercantile Library, the Philadelphia Library Company, the Philadelphia Mercantile Library, the Providence Athenæum, and the St. Louis Mercantile Library were all among the largest libraries in the country. Librarians of those nine institutions were nearly one-third of the twenty-eight individuals who signed the call for a library conference in 1876, and that percentage would increase if one included the Astor Library. Yet only one of the librarians of those institutions ever occupied the post of ALA president. Charles Ammi Cutter was a special case because of his pioneering work in cataloging and as well because of the wealth and collections of the Boston Athenæum.

It should also be noted that Cutter had spent his life in library work. So had the only other non-public librarians to become president of the ALA in its early years. If one excludes Melvil Dewey, the college or university librarians who became president were William Isaac Fletcher of Amherst and William Coolidge Lane of Harvard. They were closely identified with librarianship. They were not academic librarians who had moved over to library work from the professoriat, and they were active in library affairs. Fletcher had served the ALA in various ways and just the year before his election had started a program for instruction in librarianship at Amherst. Lane was also active in the ALA, was a lecturer at the library school at Columbia and later at Albany, and he was also president of the Massachusetts Library Club. In other words, the selection of ALA presidents showed that public librarians were dominant.

Winsor was not just a public librarian. He was librarian of *the* public library, and what a public library it was. At 299,869 volumes, the Boston Public Library was recorded as being only slightly smaller than the Library of Congress with holdings at 300,000. Moreover, Winsor's Boston Public Library was nearly twice as large as the next largest libraries—the Harvard University Library, and the New York Mercantile Library. Its circulation was recorded as being 758,493 volumes per year, the next largest being the Chicago Public Library, at 403,356.[7]

Winsor's long tenure as president of the ALA must also have something to do with the fact that he looked and acted the part. He had a neatly trimmed beard, and behind it was a man seemingly possessed of complete self-confidence, so much so that he was able to share credit with others. In, for example, his 1877 report as Superintendent of the Boston Public Library, he mentions a number of staff, he refers twice in friendly terms to Dewey, he acknowledges imitating Poole, and he acknowledges that the janitor leads in seniority on the staff. He also publicly supported staff as a body. This is from that 1877 report: "The skilled workers of the Library, though their labors require a breadth of knowledge and an acumen of the critical faculties . . . are . . . recompensed with salaries, which leave many of them to eke out a support by labors that impair their energies for the morrow's work. If the tax-payers of the city demand this sacrifice, the struggle must go on, and the harness must gall while the goal is reached. There is too much ambition to maintain the good name of the Library to allow any spirit of indifference to abate the labors imposed."

One can tell that he wrote and spoke beautifully. He represented librarians in such a way that he brought credit to librarianship. He appeared to librarians to be a force in raising the status of librarianship.

Winsor had also accomplished so much as head of the BPL. He was immensely successful at the three tasks that lay at the heart of librarianship: building collections, making them accessible through catalogs, and promoting use. Winsor clearly did not consider the first a difficult task for, as he said in the section "Library Memoranda" in the 1876 Report, "The librarian of a great library largely escapes that choosing between books necessarily imposed on those in charge of smaller collections."[8] The Boston Public Library had long used European agents, and Winsor gave them considerable latitude to select on their own, in part with the goal of speeding up receipt of material. As for American books, trade publications were apparently all supplied to the library so that it was possible to review them. Winsor did face decisions regarding ephemera and government documents, and he thought through the issues. He strongly urged collecting ephemera, arguing that "there is little that a hundred years will not enhance in value." In this, he was definitely a man of his time, for it is possible to find statement after statement from librarians urging that everything printed be preserved. To collect government documents he urged that a few great libraries in various regions institute a system of exchanges and that the states pass legislation requiring local communities to deposit copies of documents to the state libraries and to one other large library in their region.

Selection was not problematic, but how to handle material after receipt was. Winsor the organizer set up procedures so that the library could process some 20,000 volumes a year, as opposed to 5,000 to 6,000, and with more complete records readily available to the public. Winsor was not a Charles Ammi Cutter or a Melvil Dewey, he did not innovate in classifying, but he did so in another way—one aimed specifically to increase the circulation of books, particularly of non-fiction. That was, of course, a primary goal of librarians. In that era of printed book catalogs that were used by the public, Winsor added notes on content to the catalog for History, Biography, and Travel in the circulating part of the collection. The resulting catalog was highly praised, and Winsor's notes were often incorporated into the catalogs of other libraries. In Quincy, Massachusetts, under the editorial direction of Charles Francis Adams, Jr., a similar catalog was prepared. Winsor claimed that the catalog was effective in that it increased circulation of those materials.

Winsor would have gained the respect of other librarians because he had no reluctance to get into the details. For instance, how should pamphlets be handled? What kinds of bindings should be put on material? Should covers of periodicals be bound in? To Winsor, such questions were so important that he wrote: "It cannot be too strongly impressed upon a

librarian's notice that he should acquire something of an expert's knowledge of the binder's art."[9]

Buildings were also important to Winsor, and he wrote about them in reports and in the 1876 Department of Education Report.

In the third major area of librarianship, getting the books used, Winsor turned his attention to matters other than the catalogs. His goal was to circulate as many books as possible. In other words, to make the library as broadly useful as possible. To accomplish this required his attention to everything from the amount and type of fiction to buy, to the systems for recording which books were out, to policies on registering new library users, to keeping statistics, to making books accessible to the public physically and intellectually.

He did not claim to have originated branch libraries and what he called "deliveries" or what a later generation would call "delivery stations," but he advocated for them and eagerly employed them to increase the circulation of books. He shortened the time the public had to wait for books to be delivered. He declined to require the public to periodically register again. That was a procedure that many libraries used but not Winsor. He did not want registration to become a barrier to use, so he devised a system that enabled him to have a "dead" file and a "quick" file. And he kept statistics, statistics, statistics.

The statistics were crucial to Winsor, in that they gave him the data that he could then analyze. To understand Winsor's role, it seems necessary to keep in mind that this was what might be called the "heroic period of librarianship," by which I mean that it was the period in which "best practice" was being established. This was especially so at the Boston Public Library, for no institution had faced the task of running both a research library (to use the modern term) and a circulating or popular library. Moreover, the task was made more daunting by the size of the collection and of the population served. Winsor was keenly aware that the practices employed at the Boston Public Library might not be appropriate for other libraries, and he stated this explicitly.[10] It seems that he was generous of his time when other librarians came to visit to see for themselves the practices of the BPL, and he clearly had a major hand in the writing of *Free Public Libraries; Suggestions on Their Foundation and Administration* (Boston: Published by the American Social Science Association, 1871). The first edition of the book sold out so rapidly that a second revised edition was produced. Note the word "suggestions" in the title.[11] This was not a "guide," a "handbook," or a "manual." It was suggestions. At the same time that this approach would have made him the ideal person to keep a new

organization, namely the American Library Association, from splintering, it has perhaps undercut Winsor's long-term influence. It may be that there were two major approaches to librarianship at that time. One was to systematize, the other to think through each case based on the institution and the populace it served. Winsor was definitely the latter.

Just as he saw each library as constituting a system whose parts had to work together harmoniously, so did he see the library world as a community whose members might be induced to cooperate. This could be on the local level, as in calling upon libraries in a locale to share responsibility for collection coverage. Or it could be on a wider level, for Winsor hoped that libraries would cooperate to produce bibliographies and indexes.

When Winsor moved across the river to Harvard, he continued the major emphases of his years at the BPL. Just as earlier, he above all pursued the goal of making libraries as useful as possible. In his second annual report, he wrote: "There should be no bar to the use of books but the rights of others." His long attention to buildings evinced itself in his first report (1878), as he wrote about plans for a new building. There are hints that he hoped to be part of an effort to produce a universal catalog. He sought more funds for publications by the library. There are even indications that he hoped to introduce a program in education in librarianship at Harvard. He also sought permission to enter into talks with the Massachusetts Historical Society (MHS) about them erecting their new building in Harvard Yard.[12]

Basically, he had a dream, which he expressed in his first annual report: "I have at all times aimed to enlarge the Library's importance in the eyes of our academic community. I wish to see it become, not merely in complimentary phrase, the centre of the University system, but, in actual working, indispensable and attractive to all."[13] It is not clear what he meant by this, but perhaps a clue is offered by his comments on a presentation at the International Conference of Librarians held in London in October 1877: "I hope to see All Souls' and Bodley join forces to become an exemplar for the world. There is no calculating the good capable of coming from a body of educated fellows of an Oxford college devoting themselves to the science of library management. It is a fortuitous and fortunate combination of forces such as the world has never seen, and from its consummation I think we may safely date a new departure and an elevating outcome."[14] That, too, is not clear but, along with seeming to indicate that the library, in active partnership with the faculty, should be central to the mission of the university, it suggests, from context, university instruction in librarianship.

What does seem clear, even if not provable, is that Winsor was ultimately disappointed at Harvard. He was able to start a publications program, but it was always under the threat that financial support would be withdrawn. And he did succeed in increasing library use by undergraduates. Yet, a policy change such as admitting students to the stacks took a long time. It was first mentioned as a desideratum in 1878 but not written about as accomplished until 1880, and then referred to as having been carried out on a "limited" basis. His attempts at centralizing and unifying the library ultimately failed. His dream of a new building did not materialize, and instead he had to devote much attention to makeshift measures, always unsatisfying, to keep the library functioning.[15] There never was instruction in librarianship. The Harvard Corporation did not support approaching the Massachusetts Historical Society.

Winsor was, moreover, not free to act within the Gore Hall Library. Shortly after becoming librarian, he approached the Library Council (President Charles William Eliot attended the monthly meetings), and sought authorization to combine the Subject and "Author's" catalogs. One member of the Council, Ezra Abbot, now a professor but two and a half decades earlier the librarian who had set up the catalogs, opposed the change. (He had lost his voice and had arranged for President Eliot to read his statement of opposition.) For two more meetings the Council discussed the proposal, and it seems that it was never carried out. This must have been difficult for Winsor to bear, since he seems to have been accustomed to thinking through an issue and then acting decisively. Winsor sought to clarify rules concerning use of the library by non-Harvard people. Rules were drawn up, and they were even printed, except for the fifth paragraph. It permitted members of the faculty to grant library privileges to others, and the omission was at the request of the Library Council. That must have galled Winsor. Then, too, he had to put up with complaints, a notable one being by William James, who had sought to have Winsor purchase a duplicate that was basically for the use of a particular student. He cannot have been pleased to have the Council itself reviewing which duplicate periodical subscriptions to cancel. He certainly cannot have relished doing battle with a member of the Library Council when he declined to engage the services of someone recommended by the faculty member.[16]

Winsor seems, then, to have been unable to act entrepreneurially.[17] His freedom to make changes within the library was limited, and he had to suffer ill-conceived interference by faculty members in the functioning of the library.

That the Harvard library could not engage his talents in the way that the Boston Public Library did is, I think, why we have Winsor the "scholar" or, perhaps better, Winsor the producing, publishing scholar. As noted at the beginning, his scholarship—much of it, incidentally, being cooperative—was carried out in the 1880s and 1890s.

At least three possibilities exist as to why Winsor had the time at Harvard to undertake scholarly pursuits. One is that Winsor planned it that way—i.e., that the move to Harvard was to free up his time to pursue scholarly interests. I do not, however, find signs of that. In fact, he asked President Eliot for more time to make a decision, expressing the hope that the trustees of the Boston Public Library would work out appropriate salary arrangements.

Another possibility is that the job was not very large for a person of his talents and method of operation, in effect, that he had time on his hands. This is the position taken by Harvard President Charles William Eliot in a memorial statement, though he inserted as well a sentence to the effect that he and Winsor had an understanding:

> Although Mr. Winsor's administration was absolutely diligent and thorough, his knowledge of the whole subject was so comprehensive, and his quickness in executive work was so great, that from his first coming to the Library in 1877 he had much leisure, in spite of the fact that he was harassed throughout his administration by the inadequacy of Gore Hall, and was repeatedly obliged to invent and carry out temporary makeshifts. This leisure he used with extraordinary diligence for twenty years in historical research, editorship, and authorship. The precious fruits of these congenial labors are well known to this Society. It was understood in 1877, between the new Librarian and the President of the Univesity, that such leisures he might get would be used in this scholarly and serviceable way. The Harvard chronicler of this period will probably remain in doubt whether the University then enjoyed the services of a Librarian who was an historical scholar, or of an historical scholar who was Librarian. . . . [18]

The third possibility is that Winsor's turn to scholarship was an adaptation to the situation at Harvard—that he did in fact have time on his hands given the constraints under which he operated and that much of the time he did spend on the library was unsatisfying. To be sure, Winsor did make improvements, and he surely must have managed the library efficiently. I think, though, that he found in scholarship an outlet for talents that were not fully employed in librarianship. From this redirection of energies, we got Winsor the scholar-librarian, but we basically lost Winsor, the exceptionally creative scholarly librarian.[19]

NOTES

[1] The term "scholar-librarian" is used, most prominently, in a book entitled, *Justin Winsor: Scholar-Librarian*, Wayne Cutler and Michael H. Harris (Eds.). Littleton, CO: Libraries Unlimited, Inc., 1980.

[2] The major source of biographical information on Winsor is Joseph A. Boromé, "The Life and Letters of Justin Winsor." Doctoral dissertation, Columbia University, 1950. A substantial biographical account is in Cutler and Harris, *Justin Winsor*, and its list of "General Biographical Accounts," pp. 185-186, records others.

[3] The text of the report is available in Cutler and Harris, *Justin Winsor*, pp. 59-84.

[4] Although it would appear to be chance that Winsor was chosen to be a trustee of the BPL, and although he was—from our vantage point—the "logical" choice to succeed Jewett, he very likely had to campaign to succeed Jewett, and it seems not to have been inevitable that he would succeed. Walter Muir Whitehill points out in *Boston Public Library: A Centennial History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956, pp. 75-76) that William Everett Jillson, Jewett's principal assistant was first chosen as successor but did not accept the offer because of ill health. Another possibility was Edward Capen, who was "librarian" and, before Jewett, had been responsible for the library, but he declined to be a candidate. Whitehill suggests that William Frederick Poole was a candidate. The Henry Williamson Haynes papers at the Massachusetts Historical Society show that Haynes, a classicist, was an active candidate, and the detailed account of his campaign for the position that is available in his papers suggests that he was perhaps even a formidable competitor for Winsor.

[5] Information on these librarians and those discussed later and on their role in the American Library Association is drawn from Wayne A. Wiegand. (1986). *The Politics of an Emerging Profession: The American Library Association, 1876-1917*. New York; Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, and Bohdan W. Wynar. (Ed.). (1978). *Dictionary of American Library Biography*. Littleton, CO: Libraries Unlimited, Inc.

[6] U.S. Department of Education. (1876). *Public Libraries in the United States of America: Their History, Condition, and Management. Special Report*. Washington, DC: USGPO. The statistics on numbers of libraries comes from the totals given on p. 801 with the number of 732 membership libraries being the combined total of "social" and "mercantile" libraries.

[7] The statistics on circulation come from *Public Libraries in the United States of America*, pp. 811-813.

[8] *Public Libraries in the United States of America*, p. 711. Also in Cutler and Harris, *Justin Winsor*, p. 118.

[9] *Public Libraries in the United States of America*, p. 712. Also in Cutler and Harris, *Justin Winsor*, p. 119.

[10] The first article of the first issue of *Library Journal*, "A Word to Starters of Libraries" (pp. [1]-3) is by Justin Winsor, where he states: "You must not be surprised to find some diversity of views among experts. They arise from different experiences and because of the varying conditions under which a library may be administered. The processes of one library can rarely be transplanted to another without desirable modifications, arising from some change of conditions" (p. 2).

[11] The first edition contains an introductory note quoting from the 1869 annual report of the Superintendent of the Boston Public Library. That statement by Winsor expresses the need for communication among librarians, given the absence of education programs to train librarians. The "revised edition" of the same year, after printing the extract, notes that help was received, especially from the superintendent who wrote the "foregoing extract." A note also specifically thanks Winsor, along with Charles Ammi Cutter and Thomas Wentworth Higginson.

[12] Louis Leonard Tucker. (1995). *The Massachusetts Historical Society: A Bicentennial History 1791-1991*. Boston: Published by the Society, pp. 170-172.

[13] *First Report (1878)*, p. 1.

[14] *Transactions and Proceedings of the Conference of Librarians Held in London October, 1877. Edited by the Secretaries of the Conference, Edward B. Nicholson, Librarian of the London Institution,*

and Henry R. Tedder, Librarian of the Athenæum Club. London: Printed at the Chiswick Press by Charles Whittingham, 1878, p. 146.

[15] Even President Charles William Eliot acknowledged this. See below a fuller quotation from Eliot's memorial remarks in which he states that Winsor was "harassed throughout his administration by the inadequacy of Gore Hall, and was repeatedly obliged to invent and carry out temporary makeshifts."

[16] These matters are mentioned in the manuscript Records of the Library Committee and Council, 1859-1898 (UA III.50.10.150). A microfiche of the Records is available as 6-1-1 of *The Harvard University Library: A Documentary History.* Bethesda, MD: University Publications of America, 1990.

[17] At least in one instance Winsor was unable to act entrepreneurially to secure cooperation among the BPL, the Boston Athenæum, and Harvard. A letter from Charles Ammi Cutter of the Boston Athenæum (September 11, 1878, HCL Letters, vol. 18, p. 12, in the Harvard University Archives) makes it clear that Winsor had proposed joining the bulletins of the three libraries—a proposal that Cutter declined.

[18] "Remarks on the Death of Justin Winsor," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society,* 2 s. vol. 12, Boston, 1899, p. 34. Winsor's friend Horace Elisha Scudder, who probably knew Winsor's feelings, equivocated in "Memoir of Justin Winsor" (2 s. vol. 12, 1899, p. 476), by using the double negative "not unlikely": "It is not unlikely that if he had remained at the Public Library, he would have developed the line of historical work which now began to occupy so much of his attention, but he would have been in danger of an ignorant suspicion of negligence of his duty. It is hard for even a well-trained mind to hold the belief that one man could be at once an efficient administrator of a great library and so close a student, so learned a contributor to research, as Winsor proved himself to be. At Harvard he would be judged at any rate by his peers, and it is quite certain that in permitting himself to be drawn into large enterprises of a historical nature, Winsor was feeling the impulse given to his mind by the important change which he made when he came to the Harvard Library in 1877. He did not, however, take up his residence in Cambridge till 1880."

[19] Especially in the absence of Justin Winsor's papers, it is ultimately unknowable why he turned toward historical scholarship and editing. That he did so seems, however, to be undeniable, particularly in light of the efforts of both Eliot and Scudder to deal with this change in Winsor.

Dewey in Boston: 1876–1883

Wayne A. Wiegand

ABSTRACT

Between 1876 and 1883, Melvil Dewey worked as a Boston entrepreneur promoting a variety of educational schemes that addressed the nation's library, metric, and spelling reform interests. During that time he started and lost one business and started another within weeks. In addition, he used his reform zeal to develop credibility with a number of associations he helped organize, then lost that credibility, only to begin to rebuild it all over again. Throughout, he retained his boundless energy, intense commitment, self-righteous arrogance, and irrepressible reform spirit. He made many friends and many enemies. Most who came in contact with him, however—whether superior, peer, or subordinate—quickly recognized him as a forceful personality not easily swayed from goals he had set when he arrived in Boston on April 10, 1876.

On that date, Melvil Dewey, a young entrepreneur with a passion for popular education, stepped off the train in Boston to begin what he called his "life's work." For two years previous he had been Associate Librarian of Amherst College, where he created his decimal classification. In Boston, however, he had his sights set on bigger things.[1]

By May 5 he had negotiated an agreement with Ginn and Company, an educational publishing firm with a manufacturing department that also produced educational materials. In return for $2,000, Dewey agreed to set up an all-purpose office with interests in spelling reform, adoption of the metric system of weights and measures, and free public libraries. Dewey promised Ginn 10 percent of the profits specific to sales of the bureau metric materials and agreed to cover advertising, manufacturing costs, and office rental at 13 Tremont Place.[2]

Not much money for such big plans, but Dewey was undeterred. Since he had little money or personal collateral, he set up a system of business

connections whose financial interests he interlinked through a series of "bureaus" he was creating. For example, he arranged for Ginn to publish J.P. Putnam's "Metric School Chart" and negotiated agreements with the G. M. Eddy Tape and the Fairbanks Scales companies to supply him with metric measuring devices. All the companies believed they were working with Ginn; none were aware they were actually making arrangements with a separate "bureau" using Ginn's sales network to market its products.[3]

At the same time, however, Dewey worked on library interests. In April he discussed his plans for a library journal with Boston Athenaeum Director Charles Cutter, and in their conversation discovered Cutter had written U.S. Commissioner of Education John Eaton about Dewey's new decimal classification. Cutter knew Eaton was planning a major report on U.S. public libraries as part of the nation's 1876 centennial celebration, and because Dewey's scheme was "one of the most important contributions to library economy that has been made for many years," Cutter told Eaton, the report "would be very incomplete without some account of it." Several days later, the bureau asked Dewey for "a list of my library system." Before replying, however, Dewey pushed Cutter on the subject of a library journal. Together they agreed to "try for a place for the journal in the library volume." Dewey then wrote Eaton directly, asking for "sympathy in the library project."[4]

On May 16 Dewey left for New York on the overnight boat from Boston for an American Metrological Society (AMS) meeting. He arrived at 7:00 A.M. and, since he was not obligated until that afternoon, decided to visit *Publishers Weekly (PW)*. There he found editor Frederick Leypoldt and Associate Editor Richard R. Bowker. His intentions were clear. He wanted to alert *PW* to his plans for a journal and for a bureau that would market library supplies. Leypoldt said he was especially interested in the former, but also told him about a forthcoming *PW* editorial suggesting librarians meet in Philadelphia during the nation's centennial. Dewey loved the idea, and together the three men quickly drafted a "preliminary call" for a conference of librarians on August 15. Leypoldt forwarded copies to several Boston librarians.[5]

At 4:00 P.M. Dewey went to Columbia College to attend the AMS meeting and was promptly elected to its council. While there, he described his arrangements with Ginn to market metric devices through an American Metric Bureau (AMB). When Dewey returned to *PW* offices the next morning, Leypoldt said he was not interested in a "bureau" of library supplies, but wanted to own and distribute a library journal from New York. He then asked Dewey to become its Managing Editor and run it from Boston.

Except for rent, Leypoldt said, he would cover all of Dewey's office expenses incurred for the journal and pay Dewey $500 a year for his work plus 20% of the journal's gross receipts. Dewey quickly accepted.[6]

An active May and June were only a prelude to an even more hectic July and August, when Dewey's specific plans for his education reform interests took shape. By that time, he had determined to establish "bureaus" for the manufacture and sale of library, metric, and spelling reform supplies (he helped organize the Spelling Reform Association [SRA] in August), and to manage all these interests from his Boston office. To fund them, he linked the accounts for each into a single set of books thus allowing him to extend his limited financial base by shifting funds from one account to another as he deemed necessary. Most business contemporaries would have judged Dewey's methods irresponsible, but to an irrepressible reformer shunning personal gain and intensely committed to education of the masses, their use seemed warranted. For Dewey, the ends justified the means. And, to gain those ends, Dewey worked long hours, lived very frugally, and rolled back into his ventures almost all the money he earned.

The prospectus for a library journal that Dewey drafted for the Bureau of Education is illuminating for what Dewey hoped to accomplish as its Managing Editor. "The science of library management, and particularly that part of it which relates to the elevation of the tastes of readers, is yet but in its infancy," he said. The journal would accelerate the growth of that science in special ways. First, the journal would become a "medium of communication" so librarians could learn from each other's experiences. Second, emphasis would be not so much on identifying quality books as on methods for getting those books read. Third, the journal would also facilitate "early completion" of a new edition of *Poole's Index to Periodical Literature* (compiled by W. F. Poole as a Yale student in the 1840s) and effect "a national organization" dedicated to "bringing the libraries into intimate relations." Finally, Dewey forecast a library "bureau" that would "serve as a guide in selecting the best forms of the various library supplies." The "bureau" would also explore printing titles of new books "in such a way that they can be used for the catalogues of all libraries." Although these could be distributed to subscribing libraries at "slight expense," they would inevitably lead to "an immense saving of time" because each title would be cataloged only once. In effect, Dewey had turned a prospectus for a library journal into an outline for a library association and a library bureau, all three of which he believed would facilitate the development of uniform systems and increase efficiency.[7]

At 10:15 A.M. on October 4, 1876, Boston Public Library Director Justin Winsor called the librarians' conference to order at the Historical Society

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of Pennsylvania. Before the end of the conference a committee on permanent organization reported a preamble to a still unwritten constitution. "For the purpose of promoting the library interests of the country, and of increasing reciprocity of intelligence and goodwill among librarians and all interested in library economy and bibliographic studies," the preamble stated, "the undersigned form themselves into a body to be known as the AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION." Dewey signed first.

At 25, Dewey was different from other ALA leaders. While he certainly shared their belief in the power of reading and the educational mission of the library, he was convinced that the best way to maximize the library's potential was to create relatively uniform collections of quality materials and increase service efficiency by standardizing internal library procedures with common forms, appliances, and rules and systems of arrangement. Throughout the conference, Dewey was the only prominent participant to focus on small public libraries which, he realized, stood to gain most from standardization and systematization. Small public libraries, he believed, had the greatest potential to meet the educational needs of "children of the lower classes" beyond elementary school.

By October 1876, Dewey had moved his offices to more spacious quarters at 1 Tremont Place, where he continued to make every effort to tie together all his reform interests. There he not only served as American Metric Bureau manager, but also as SRA secretary and editor of its publications, ALA secretary-treasurer, and *Library Journal* managing editor. To AMB members he later wrote: "Every practical labor or money-saving device has been employed to make the most of our limited efforts and means." Office equipment, he said, included duplicating machines, an electric pen, and a typewriter. Office material included forty-five different circulars, thirty bulletins, and hundreds of preprinted postcards used to respond to common inquiries. Dewey did not mention that this equipment was also being used for ALA and SRA and for both their journals.[8]

Although Dewey continued his duties as *Library Journal* managing editor, things were not going well; *Library Journal* lost $1,100 its first year of operation. By late 1878 Bowker decided to cut expenses by moving the journal's business management to New York. Dewey reacted sharply. On January 8, 1879, he threatened to start an "opposition journal" with the help of "leading men of ALA" from Boston unless the journal's publishers gave him a more favorable contract. Bowker bristled. *Library Journal* could not continue to duplicate expenses at Dewey's Boston office for services which could just as easily be covered at Bowker's New York office, he said and, if Dewey persisted, he would show Cutter and Winsor Dewey's Janu-

ary 8 letter. Bowker realized Dewey was using his ties with ALA to press *Library Journal* into keeping its business management in Boston. What he did not realize, however, was how closely Dewey had tied all of his reform interests to his Boston office, how tenuously the whole structure balanced on money Dewey had interlinked into a single account, and how threatened that structure became when any one component was removed.[9]

The incident demonstrates a set of circumstances that for years had a significant impact on ALA. Since October 1876, Dewey had served as the link between ALA and *Library Journal*. On the one hand, he used the journal's columns as a way to keep his ideas of an expanded library cooperation and efficiency that would benefit from a library bureau before the eyes of the nation's library community. He also used its advertising sections to market American Metric Bureau and Spelling Reform Association products, but instead of paying for that space, he "traded" it with advertising space in the *Metric* and SRA *Bulletins*. No money exchanged hands; the value of the trades occurred entirely in the columns of Dewey's account books. That spelling reformers and metric reform advocates might not be the most promising market for *Library Journal* subscriptions did not seem to bother Dewey; in his mind all these activities were part of a large game plan he ran from his "bureaus" in Boston. And since he was not after material gain, he could not fathom how some people might consider his motives suspect. Still Dewey had no reservations about harnessing his ALA ties to evoke a better deal with *Library Journal*, and using that money to support the empire he was trying to piece together in Boston.[10]

In March 1879, Dewey decided to reorganize his interests and coordinate all of his bureaus into a new organization—the Readers and Writers Economy Company (RWEC). Dewey served as manager of the company and owned $10,000 of the $25,000 worth of stock. An agreement he drafted with fellow investor Frederick Jackson called upon both parties to "loan" all dividends and salary back to the company at 8 percent interest, and specified that all receipts from ALA, AMB, SRA, and *LJ* "be shared equally with Jackson by direct payment" into the RWEC treasury. Jackson was guaranteed a salary of at least $1,500 per year as treasurer, and Dewey agreed to take no more "than $3,500 per year including all commissions on subscriptions and advertising for the *Library Journal*."[11] So far as is known, neither Dewey nor Jackson ever informed other affected parties about these arrangements.

Business grew rapidly. By May Dewey had moved to larger quarters at 32 Hawley Street and by June had removed partitions between rooms 6, 7, and 8 to create one big Economy Company office to accommodate all his

reform interests. December 10, 1879, was a significant day. On his 28th birthday he officially changed the spelling of his name to "Dui" and incorporated SRA in Connecticut and ALA in Massachusetts. He also incorporated the RWEC as a joint stock company, assumed the position of president, and capitalized it at $100,000 by dividing 4,000 shares at $25 each. Dui claimed RWEC as sole manufacturers of 400 "improved devices for desk, study, and library" designed "to save time, money and labor."[12]

His relationship with *Library Journal*, however, continued to deteriorate. In June 1880, Bowker got Leypoldt to agree to suspend publication of the journal and consolidate it with *Publisher's Weekly*. When Leypoldt made the announcement, however, the library community deluged him with protests and forced him to recant. Bowker was angry and suspected Dui had been instrumental in the campaign. Not so, Leypoldt wrote, "Dui had no hand in this." Leypoldt's wife was less charitable. "I never believed in the *Library Journal*, because I knew it would not pay and I thought Dewey about as miserable a specimen of a gabbling idiot as I had ever beheld."[13]

On October 11, 1880, however, Dui's problems increased. That day several RWEC stockholders who had been scrutinizing company books visited a local judge to ask for an injunction against Dui. In their complaint they noted Dui credited himself for 2,684 shares of RWEC stock but did not have the capital to back it up. They told the judge they were forced to ask for an injunction because Dui's majority control would allow him to block any move against his control of the corporation, and they needed an independent audit to decipher RWEC books. Until that audit was complete, they argued, Dui ought to be denied access to RWEC accounts and prevented from incurring any debts. The judge agreed and granted the injunction. That afternoon, at a regularly scheduled RWEC directors meeting, stockholders surprised Dui by serving him with the injunction. Dui was caught off guard and insulted at finding his motives were considered suspect. He felt no choice but to resign as president and director of RWEC, both of which were unanimously accepted. At the same time, RWEC trustees directed their lawyer to open any mail addressed to Dui that came "through our box." They knew orders and correspondence concerning the company's products were just as likely to be addressed to Dui personally or to Dui as secretary of the ALA, AMB, or SRA.[14]

Reaction from members of the associations and organizations whose treasuries were now frozen because Dewey had consolidated them all into RWEC accounts was understandably negative. For example, Frederick Leypoldt responded to the news by writing Dewey that "your peculiar way of doing business has cost this office more in time than all that you claim

could amount to." At the end of the contract year, he said, Dui would be dropped as *Library Journal* editor. ALA moved just as quickly. When Dui did not appear at an ALA Executive Board meeting December 5, the board accepted a resignation he had not tendered and empowered another officer to take control of ALA funds and books. Dui protested but to no avail. "We argue to no purpose," ALA President Winsor replied.[15]

The arbitration process was contentious, but Dui finally settled with the Readers and Writers Economy Company on January 10, 1881. For his part Dui agreed to clear all claims against RWEC from the business associates and professional organizations he represented. For its part, the RWEC agreed to return all personal property to Dui and "the three societies in Dui's charge," to transfer "all its rights & title to any good will, patronage, or influence" of the SRA, AMB, and ALA "or the supply departments pertaining to each," and to sell to Dui at cost any articles owned by RWEC connected with these organizations and departments. The settlement showed no clear winners or losers. The RWEC's major goal was to rid the company of Dui and "his clogging business complications." Dui realized assets totaling $19,000, but he received nothing for the business nor any compensation for the work he had put into it.[16]

Dui lost no time in founding a new business. He used most of the cash realized from the settlement to pay debts to the ALA, SRA, and AMB treasury and to creditors with claims against him as RWEC president. With money realized from paid-up stock that he pledged as security, he was back in business at 32 Hawley Street. It was from that address he sent out a four-page circular on March 20 announcing his new arrangement. On page four he informed readers of the significant personal sacrifice he was making on behalf of each of these societies, and he called upon members of each to increase orders to his supply departments. "All Metric articles will be sold as before under the name METRIC BUREAU." The "Library Supplies Department," on the other hand, "will go under the name LIBRARY BUREAU." He told readers he had secured four regular and three special assistants, and invited everyone to visit him at his "old offices."[17] For the next two years, Dui devoted himself to the Library Bureau. R.G. Dun & Company, which compiled credit reports on American businesses between the 1840s and 1880s, described Dui in 1881 as "a sanguine well-meaning man, full of little schemes for economizing the time and labor of librarians & literary men" who had "no capacity for bus. affairs and no means worth mentioning."

Despite a lack of capital, however, Dui persisted. On May 31, 1881, he incorporated the "Library and Metric Bureau" in the State of Massachusetts

and continued to promote his educational reform schemes. In 1882, for example, Wellesley hired him as a Library Bureau consultant to reclassify its collections. Dui used the opportunity to expand his original decimal scheme, and he trained several Wellesley Class of 1883 members to implement the changes. By the time he had completed his consultation, he had already determined the substantive changes and new headings for a second edition.[18]

For Melvil Dui, the years in Boston between 1876 and 1883 had been highly productive and highly tumultuous; they were also gratifying and painful. He started and lost one business and started another like it within weeks. He used his reform zeal to develop credibility with a number of associations he helped organize, then lost that credibility, then began to rebuild it all over again. Throughout he retained his boundless energy, intense commitment, self-righteous arrogance, and irrepressible reform spirit. He made many friends and many enemies. Most who came in contact with him, however—whether superior, peer, or subordinate—quickly recognized him as a forceful personality not easily swayed from the goals he had when he stepped off that train in Boston on April 10, 1876.

But in 1883 Dui was also "open to some engagement where I think I can do good work." On May 7 he found it. On that day he decided to return to his home state of New York by accepting an offer to become Chief Librarian of Columbia College. He saw it as a good opportunity to develop, implement, and ultimately demonstrate the value of most of the library reforms (and some of the metric and spelling reforms) he had been pushing for nearly ten years. And, sometime that month, at the request of one of his new employers who was critical of "eccentricity [in] the spelling of his name," he officially changed it back to Dewey.[19]

NOTES

1 Much of the information contained in this paper is taken from my *Irrepressible Reformer: A Biography of Melvil Dewey*. Chicago: American Library Association, 1996.

2 Dewey Diary, April 20, 1876; May 2, 1876, Melvil Dewey Papers, Rare Books and Manuscripts Reading Room, Butler Library, Columbia University, New York, New York (hereafter cited as Dewey Mss.).

3 Dewey Diary, April 25, 1876; April 27, 1876, Dewey Mss. A copy of the contract between Ginn and Putnam can be found in Box 68, Dewey Mss.

4 Dewey Diary, April 18, 1876; April 19, 1876; April 20, 1876; April 21, 1876; April 22, 1876; April 27, 1876 (quoting April 20, 1876, letter from Cutter to Bureau of Education); April 28, 1876; and April 29, 1876, Dewey Mss. Dewey used various forms of simplified spelling his entire adult life. I quote them here without use of "[sic]."

5 Dewey Diary, May 11, 1876; May 12, 1876; May 13, 1876; and May 16, 1876, Dewey Mss.

6 Dewey Diary, May 17, 1876; May 18, 1876, Dewey Mss. A copy of the contract Leypoldt proposed to Dewey, dated May 18, 1876, can be found in Box 64, Dewey Mss.

7 Dewey's undated draft of a prospectus for a library journal is in Box 29, Dewey Mss.

8 *Proceedings*, American Metric Bureau, Vol. I (1877), p. 71. See also Dewey circular to Ameri-

can Metric Bureau membership, November 15, 1877; and circular entitled "Our First Thousand Days," March 27, 1879, Box 66, Dewey Mss.

[9] Bowker to Dewey, personal communication, January 9, 1879, R.R. Bowker Papers, Special Collections, New York Public Library, New York, New York (hereafter cited as Bowker Mss.). See also Bowker to Cutter, personal communication, January 13, 1879; and Bowker to Winsor, personal communication, January 15, 1879, Bowker Mss.

[10] See, for example, Bowker to Winsor, personal communication, June 16, 1879, Justin Winsor Letters bound into 1881 volume of *Library Journal*, Dominican University Library, River Forest, Illinois; and Leypoldt to Bowker, personal communication, July 1, 1879, Bowker Mss.

[11] "Readers and Writers Economy Co.," R.G. Dun and Co. Collection, Special Collections Department, Baker Library, Graduate School of Business Administration, Soldiers Field, Harvard University, Boston, Massachusetts (hereafter cited as Dun Collection), MA 80/ p. 358. Dewey's contract with Jackson, dated May 8, 1879; and "Agreement Made at Boston," May 8, 1879, in Box 81, Dewey Mss.

[12] For listing of Readers and Writers Economy Company products, see RWEC letterhead stationery, Box 63, Dewey Mss.

[13] *Library Journal*, 5(July-August, 1880), 207-208; (September-November, 1880), 248-249; Leypoldt to Bowker, personal communication, August 11, 1880; and Augusta Leypoldt to Bowker, personal communication, September 18, 1880, Bowker Mss.

[14] The "complaint" of the committee, the injunction of the judge, and the minutes of the October 11, 1880, RWEC meeting are in Box 61, Dewey Mss.

[15] Leypoldt to Dui, personal communication, October 4, 1880; October 7, 1880, Box 1; Dui to Winsor, personal communication, December 13, 1880; Winsor to Dui, personal communication, December 14, 1880; December 20, 1880; December 23, 1880; December 31, 1880; January 14, 1881; and January 25, 1881, Box 7, Dewey Mss.

[16] Copy of the agreement in Box 61, Dewey Mss. Dui details the financial ramifications of his settlement in Dui to Bowker, June 6, 1881, Bowker Mss.

[17] Dui's March 20, 1881 circular in Box P-36, Dewey Mss.

[18] See "Library Bureau," MA 88/p. 184, Dun Collection. See John Comaromi. (1976). *The eighteen editions of the Dewey Decimal Classification.* Albany, NY: Forest Press (see Chapter 3 for more information on the development of the second edition of the decimal scheme.

[19] F. Augustus Schermerhorn (Columbia College Trustee) to F.A.P. Barnard (Columbia College President), April 14, 1883; Barnard to Dui, personal communication, April 15, 1883, Box 18, Dewey Mss.

Referred to the Librarian, with Power to Act

Herbert Putnam and the Boston Public Library

Jane Aikin

ABSTRACT

Herbert Putnam was librarian of the Boston Public Library between February 1895 and April 1899, the first experienced librarian to hold that post since Charles Coffin Jewett (1855-68). This article reviews the circumstances surrounding his appointment and discusses his accomplishments, including expansion of the library system, services for scholars, services to schools, the addition of new departments, and a new staff classification and promotion system. The physical problems of the library's new building and the resulting renovation are also addressed.

Herbert Putnam's most notable accomplishments are generally traced to his tenure as Librarian of Congress (April 1899-July 1939). Those accomplishments nevertheless built upon his considerable administrative experience in public libraries, several years in the practice of law, and close ties to the Putnam publishing house. As the sixth son of George Palmer Putnam, Herbert Putnam was only eleven when three of his elder brothers took over the Putnam publishing house. His work lay elsewhere. After graduating from Harvard in 1883, he attended law school at Columbia but soon became intrigued with library administration. Between 1884 and 1891 he was in Minneapolis, Minnesota—first as librarian of the Athenaeum, an endowed private subscription library, and later as director of the city's new public library, when the two positions were united. From 1892 to 1895 he practiced law in Boston. Early in 1895, just as the Boston Public Library moved into its new building on Copley Square, its Board of Trustees invited him to become librarian.

From the beginning of his library career, Putnam never held any post other than that of director, and he made every important decision (and the less important ones as well) at every institution he served. As a novice, Putnam seems to have modeled his policies at least partly on Justin Winsor's administration of the Boston Public Library.[1] But it is important to take note of his work in Minneapolis because it prepared him so well for the later posts in

Boston and Washington, D.C. He planned the Minneapolis Public Library building, hired its first staff, established its first branch libraries, and instituted its work with teachers and schools. Also in Minneapolis, he installed modern systems of charging books and of cataloging and classifying, and most important, he placed collections of books on open shelves where readers could readily use them.[2] However, Putnam's service in Minneapolis ended abruptly when his wife's mother became seriously ill. Resigning his position, he moved his family to Boston to be near her, electing to practice law rather than obtain a library position.

Meanwhile, the Boston Public Library had lost its one-time eminence. Walter Muir Whitehill, the historian of that library, declared that when Justin Winsor "crossed the Charles River to Cambridge in September 1877, the Boston Public Library wandered into a wilderness from which it did not emerge for eighteen years."[3] The trustees soon named a new librarian, Judge Mellen Chamberlain, formerly of the Boston Municipal Court. However, Chamberlain, by his own account, found the library "running itself" quite well as Winsor had left it. In fact, the trustees became the chief administrators of the institution during his tenure. When Chamberlain retired in 1890, the Board, after much discussion, appointed Theodore Frelinghuysen Dwight, former librarian of the Department of State and archivist of the Adams family archives. Nevertheless, they undercut his authority by designating a subordinate, Louis F. Gray, as clerk of the corporation. Dwight left the library after only eighteen months' service.[4]

The Boston trustees' preference for managing the library themselves annoyed leaders of the rapidly growing library profession, and at a dinner given by Boston publishers and printers on September 19, 1890, for visiting members of the American Library Association, William Frederick Poole did not allow politeness to forestall criticism. A specialist in library architecture and librarian of Chicago's Newberry Library, Poole complained at length in his after-dinner remarks about the impracticality of the plans for Boston's palatial new Florentine Renaissance building and about the fact that librarians had not been consulted about its design. His speech provoked a heated response by Samuel A. B. Abbott, president of the Board of Trustees, which appeared in Boston newspapers. But the editors of *Library Journal* and the *Nation* defended Poole, widely publicizing the small esteem of the profession for the second largest library in the nation.[5] Two years later, another library leader, Charles Soule, published a series of letters in the *Boston Herald* that scathingly accused the board of mismanagement, of ignoring the needs of the public and the schools, and of perpetuating "cultural exclusiveness" while disdaining modern library administration.[6] His criticism must have carried significant weight: as a trustee of the Brookline, Massa-

chusetts, Public Library, Soule was both well informed about the Boston library problems and well respected by the library profession.

Putnam had arrived in Boston when the *Herald* published Soule's letters, and he was probably aware of the controversy. But he carried out his plan to practice law, refusing an 1893 invitation to become librarian of Brown University. With the new library building scheduled to open in February 1895, however, the profession again tried to exercise its influence in Boston: Caleb B. Tillinghast, librarian of the Massachusetts State Library, wrote to board member Josiah H. Benton, Jr., recommending thirty-three-year-old Herbert Putnam as the best possible candidate for librarian. Describing the young lawyer as "live, progressive and industrious" with "the energy and nerve that could ensure success," Tillinghast clearly conveyed the assurance that by appointing Putnam the trustees might be able to restore Boston Public to leadership status in the library world.[7] Members of the library board in Minneapolis also wrote on his behalf—e.g., University of Minnesota President Cyrus Northrop and Samuel Hill, president of the Minneapolis Trust Company. Among other testimonials, they noted that Harvard President Charles Eliot had described Putnam as one of the three best librarians in the country. Coincidentally, with the new library completed, Abbott planned to retire from the board, and three other members had recently resigned. By early February, the board had a majority of new members, and Abbott joined them to elect Putnam as librarian.[8]

When Herbert Putnam walked up the steps to take charge on February 11, 1895, a unique opportunity lay before him. The Boston Public Library, "the oldest of large American public libraries" now had the "first great municipal library building in the country." Its collection of over 600,000 volumes ranked second in size only to the Library of Congress, and in quality the Boston collection was arguably superior, since it boasted numerous gifts of not only rare and unusual material but entire special collections. Putnam's task was to convince the board to allow him to bring modern professional administration to the library. And with the supreme self-confidence that he habitually displayed, he moved quickly.[9] After three months, the trustees named him clerk of the corporation, providing him admission to their meetings, and the board's minutes soon began to include the phrase "referred to the Librarian, with power to act."[10] Within the year, the trustees publicly declared that the responsibility for meeting "the just wants of the public" must belong to the librarian, and they codified that statement in their bylaws.[11] The board still had to approve any changes Putnam wanted to make, and any titles he wanted to add; the librarian had to submit weekly and monthly written reports, and each year the board appointed an examining committee to evaluate the institution. But both the board and successive

examining committees clearly held the librarian's recommendations in great esteem. As Putnam's contribution to the *Annual Report* became longer each year, the board's and examiners' reports just as punctually shrank.

A month after Putnam took charge, he installed a new system of graded service under which both appointments to the library staff and promotion from grade to grade would be achieved through examination. There were five grades, each with a minimum and maximum salary and, after reaching the highest salary within a grade, employees could apply for promotion, which depended on both the examination results and the excellence of his or her previous service. The system created, the librarian observed, "both hope and despondency" among the staff since it favored the enterprising and the accomplished over the less educated and less energetic.[12] A series of new appointments followed, making it evident that Putnam would select his staff with care. Perhaps most interesting is the fact that women, whose appointment to major administrative posts was not necessarily accepted in the profession, filled important positions—for example, auditor and the key posts of chief of the Ordering Department and chief of the Issue Department.[13]

Putnam set high standards for library service. Entirely characteristic of his ideas was an early request to readers to report their difficulties. For example, since the book delivery system proved deficient, he posted a notice asking users to wait fifteen minutes and then notify the staff of the delay. "Such a complaint will not be deemed an intrusive grievance, but a service," it read. Likewise, he asked the staff to keep careful records of unfilled requests and to tabulate the reasons for failure so that deficiencies could be remedied. Staff members should assist users to the extent of their ability, but also "see to it that every . . . person having complaint or grievance, whether just or unjust, or unable to get the material he desires in the ordinary course" be sent to the librarian's office to discuss the matter privately with Putnam himself. Given his insistence on unfailing courtesy, the spirit of what the 1895 examining committee called "gracious helpfulness" quickly became a Boston Public Library norm.[14]

A notable event of Putnam's first year in Boston was the opening of "The Juvenile Room," probably the first room devoted to service for children in any of the large public libraries in this country.[15] He also had a *Selected List for Younger Readers* compiled as a common listing of the open shelf collections he had begun to purchase for the central library and all nine branch libraries. Cooperation with the schools, a persistent theme of his work in Minneapolis, soon appeared in Boston, encouraged by enhancing borrowing privileges for teachers, by locating library delivery stations in several public schools, by providing topical lists of books for students' research and gen-

eral reading, by sending collections of reproductions of art works and photos to the branches, and by welcoming classes to the library.[16] Other important expansions in service occurred with the opening of a new branch library, the extension of evening hours from nine to ten o'clock, and opening the library on Sundays for the first time. The examining committee expressed satisfaction with Putnam's administration in their year-end report and, in an editorial of April 6, 1896, the *Boston Herald* commented that the librarian had not "lost himself in the routine work of library management" but had "risen to the conception of what the Public Library should be to the people of Boston."[17]

The ensuing years saw major development of the system of branch libraries begun by Justin Winsor.[18] To bring the branches closer to the central library, in 1896 Putnam created the position of Supervisor of Branches and Stations "to unify the outlying system, to strengthen the collection of books, to improve the equipment, and to introduce uniform and modern methods of administration."[19] The supervisor scheduled regular meetings for branch personnel with the central library staff, attendance at library professional meetings, and inter-branch visits. Other developments revealed Putnam's interest in both standardization and equity among branches. Both the children's section and the open shelf system were introduced in the branches; new collections of reference books were purchased for them; and topical collections of book were sent to them when teachers requested resources. To simplify branch operations, to save space, and to increase efficiency, the librarian moved all cataloging to the central library, and he ordered a reclassification of all branch collections to a common system, a project that began in 1898.

The smallest units of the system, delivery stations, were in 1895 "no more than a desk in a shop" whose proprietor received $250 per year for sending in requests for books to the central library and distributing them to requesters. But with a circulation of less than 5,000 volumes a year, the stations were not cost-effective. Putnam decided to reduce the unit cost by increasing circulation. He asked the proprietors each to set aside a separate room in which a 300- to 500-volume collection, table, and chairs were installed, promising in return compensation based on the number of volumes circulated per month.[20] As a result of this incentive system, circulation in deposit stations more than doubled, and new delivery wagons conspicuously labeled "Boston Public Library," which transported books among all the libraries daily, also periodically rotated the delivery station collections.

Convinced that the library got more out of the new arrangement because it was to the proprietor's advantage to make the space attractive, advertise the

collection, and provide service, Putnam did admit one disadvantage: the users, and consequently the proprietors, constantly clamored for more fiction. With the proportion of fiction to nonfiction in library branches and stations maintained at a little more than three-fifths fiction, such demands conflicted with Putnam's objective of raising "the character of the reading by rendering locally accessible in these collections books of a serious nature which might be examined without formality and drawn without delay." The first superintendent of branches, Hiller Wellman, nevertheless advocated allowing some books that lacked literary merit, "as stepping-stones to better reading," and he once admitted to a "systematic endeavor to avoid respectable dulness."[21] Wellman considered lowering the rate of compensation (which on February 1, 1898 was $12 for the first 300 books and two cents for each additional volume) for circulating fiction but, for unstated reasons, found that solution impractical. Putnam's remedy was to provide more guidance for readers, and by 1899 five of the stations had become "reading rooms," each with a library employee in charge and with enriched collections that included reference books and periodicals.[22]

Expanding the number of delivery stations annually greatly increased access to the library's resources, but Putnam and Wellman also added small groups, at first of 25 and later of 50 books, for rotating deposit in public buildings. By the end of Putnam's tenure, the number of branches had increased by only one, but there were five reading rooms and thirteen delivery stations. Twenty-two fire stations received books regularly, as did one post office, four public schools, and five specialized schools. Readership expanded amazingly. On January 1, 1895, the library had 29,871 card holders, but that number increased by the thousands annually until, on February 1, 1899, there were 72,005 card holders—a 141 percent increase. Circulation had climbed from 279,494 volumes circulated from the central library to 422,849, while branch library book use rose from 567,827 to 822,993.[23] The deposit collection of 8,000 books, segmented to rotate constantly among 48 different locations, recorded more than 150,000 circulations in 1898.

One important weakness of the branches and deposit stations in 1895 was that nearly half the requests users sent to the Central Library were for books that the library did not own, at least partly because there was no printed list of library holdings for them to consult.[24] In 1896, Putnam established the position of Editor of Library Publications and replaced the quarterly *Boston Public Library Bulletin,* which cost 25 cents, with a free *Monthly Bulletin* of current accessions and selected topical lists. He also began a selected *Annual List* of new books and issued subject bibliographies—all printed on the library's new linotype machine, while a second machine, especially adapted by the manufacturer to print diacritical marks, produced printed

catalog cards. The linotype also provided all the library's stationery, call slips, signs, and other needed items, and linotype slugs were stored, for example, from the *Bulletin* so that they could be used later to print the *Annual List.* The adaptation of the linotype to catalog cards, a pioneering application, awakened such wide interest among librarians that the library's printing operation became the subject of an exhibit at the 1898 International Conference of Librarians in London.[25]

Also in 1896, the librarian began creating special services for researchers and scholars. He established an interlibrary loan service and advertised the availability of a public stenographer to search for and supply materials from the collections to researchers and institutions at a distance and a "photograph room" in which copies might be made of manuscripts, plates, or other material. A union list of periodicals held by Boston libraries appeared in 1897.[26] Lectures and exhibitions began to be scheduled, held on the upper floor reserved for the specialized collections and departments and drawing on their resources. By the end of 1898, based on his experience of organizing a Department of Periodicals and Public Documents in Minneapolis, and using as a core collection the recently donated library of the American Statistical Association, the librarian had set up a new Department of Documents and Statistics with Worthington Chauncey Ford, the former Chief of the U. S. Treasury Department's Bureau of Statistics, in charge.

The new building caused Putnam's greatest administrative difficulties. Some of these occurred because of the expanded scale of operations: the old library had accommodated up to 250 readers, but the new one could hold nearly 900; the cost of coal more than tripled; cleaning costs went up 133 percent; and the engineering, janitorial, and repair staff increased from four to sixteen, including a painter and a "marble polisher." Other difficulties were traceable to design problems—for example, because the three main stack areas were not connected, processing call-slips required eight employees instead of three, and the Issue Department required 43 staff members where 20 had previously sufficed. The trustees had requested a $215,000 annual appropriation for the new library, but the city provided only $175,000. Thus some library departments could not be opened until late in 1895, furniture needs went unmet, book purchasing ceased for a brief period, salaries were decreased, some staff terminated, and the library closed early to save on expenses.

Still other problems appeared as the staff discovered more physical defects. The power plant was not large enough to run the lighting and the ventilation systems, but the engines were noisy enough to annoy readers in the periodical room above. The basement was too damp to allow the planned

storage of periodicals and newspapers. The architect had provided for a single passenger elevator but no service elevator; lighting was too dim in several reading rooms; and the ornate walls lacked clocks. As the issue desk employees accepted call slips from patrons, they discovered that the slips were apt to drop out of the containers and remain lost in the pneumatic tube system. The book railway repeatedly broke down. Transporting oversized books by the book elevators proved impossible without delay and damage, with the result that the collections of architecture, fine art, technical arts, and music all had to be moved to the Special Libraries floor. The cards in the card catalog had been punched to fit the rods, but many shelf numbers were punched out in the process, making it impossible for users to record them correctly. Yet, despite the many problems, the number of users surpassed all expectations: the newspaper and periodical rooms, the Juvenile's Room, and even Bates Hall, the vast general reading room, were all constantly crowded.

Since it was evident that extensive changes would have to be made, by 1898 the trustees obtained authorizing legislation and an act of the city council that provided a special appropriation of $100,000 for doubling the size of the Juvenile's Room and the Ordering Department, moving the Newspaper Room and returning that space to its intended use as a lecture hall, building library administrative offices and adding the old office space to the Delivery Room where improved tubes and carriers provided complete intercommunication for the first time among the three stack areas.[27] A new Branch Division office, offices for the editor, and the chiefs of the Issue and Ordering Departments, and space for a staff lunchroom and locker rooms were laid out. Rooms were constructed for the chief janitor, the custodian of library supplies, and for sorting collection duplicates. Workmen installed two additional elevators. Putnam dryly noted that "in the case of the heating and ventilating system, the total work actually done has exceeded by a hundred per cent the work originally planned," but the extent of the frustration of trustees, staff, and users became even more obvious when he commented that only the "most embarrassing difficulties have been overcome, and the most pressing needs of the moment have been met."[28]

Characteristically, on the very next page of Putnam's 1898 report, he turned to a review of the needs of the branch libraries, terming them "ill-proportioned to existing needs" and condemning one branch located "in a neighborhood tending to demoralize its readers," as "meagre, ill-ventilated, inconvenient and uninviting." Estimating the cost of essential alterations systemwide at $500,000, and echoing several years' worth of complaints from the Examining Committee, he added that: "A supreme advantage would be the application of such a sum all at once under a general scheme

of improvement." But while the city appropriation had grown to $245,000 by 1899, the loss of income from fines and from the sale of the old library building (the rental of which had enhanced the library's budget), while staff and maintenance costs increased meant that the book budget showed an actual decrease.[29]

In early 1899, President William McKinley asked Putnam to become Librarian of Congress. His work in Boston had greatly enhanced his professional reputation: he was one of a group of American Library Association (ALA) leaders testifying before a Congressional committee in 1896 regarding the status and role of the Library of Congress, and he had been elected president of the ALA in 1898, succeeding the deceased Justin Winsor. Putnam resigned his Boston position reluctantly, for the Library of Congress salary was less and its political demands were far more intense. Certainly the challenges were both larger and different than those he faced in Boston. The call to the national library, with the prospect of extending library services—on not only the federal level but to every library in the land, would require not only his managerial and legal expertise but also the ability to gain and retain support for the library's role as a national institution.[30] Sending his resignation to the trustees on March 18, 1899, Putnam received their gratitude for "the harmonious and helpful relations between the librarian and the trustees from the day he accepted office; the remarkable administrative qualities he has shown—in directing the alterations . . . in increasing to so large a degree the interest the public takes in the library, until today it has a larger constituency than any other—in instituting so successfully the work of the public library in connection with the public schools—and in making the public realize that this institution created and supported by it, really belongs to it, and needs its ever-enlarging patronage and generosity."[31]

These were significant accomplishments. But among the lessons learned in Minneapolis and Boston, perhaps the one that would most affect Putnam's Library of Congress service was his recognition of the value of allying private wealth with public institutions. In Minneapolis, the Athanaeum's well-established support and excellent collections provided a cultural foundation for the public library's newer collection. And in Boston the rich special collections—among them the Ticknor collection of Spanish literature, the Bowditch collection of mathematics, the Lewis collection of early printed books on America, the Allen A. Brown music library, and the Chamberlain collection of autographs—provided the distinction of fine research holdings to a municipal institution. Endowed libraries, identified by name with the original donor, Putnam observed, sooner or later would lack the necessary funds for administration while public institutions funded on an ongoing

basis could freely invite benefactors to share the honors of association with their work.[32] He was exceptionally fortunate to enjoy such associations in Boston, for it would take fully a quarter century of his hard work before the Library of Congress equaled the Boston Public Library in either splendor of collections or munificence of donors.

NOTES

1 Putnam, Herbert. (1901). The public library in the United States: Some recent phases and tendencies. *International Monthly, 3*(January), 57.

2 Countryman, Gratia A. (1929). Mr. Putnam and the Minneapolis Public Library. In William Warner Bishop & Andrew Keogh (Eds.), *Essays offered to Herbert Putnam by his colleagues and friends on his thirtieth anniversary as Librarian of Congress, 5 April 1929* (pp. 5-9). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press; Mearns, David Chambers. (1954). Herbert Putnam: Librarian of the United States, The Minneapolis years. *Wilson Library Bulletin, 29*(September), 59-63.

3 Whitehill, Walter Muir. (1956). *Boston Public Library: A centennial history*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, p. 109. See also Wadlin, Horace G. (1911). *The Public Library of the City of Boston: A history*. Boston: Printed by the Library and Published by the Trustees.

4 Whitehill, *Boston Public Library*, pp. 115-116, 127-130. The librarian's duties were usurped by Board President William W. Greenough, who retired in 1888, and by Samuel Appleton Browne Abbott, his successor.

5 Mr. W. F. Poole's Remarks at the Publishers' and Booksellers' Dinner. (1890). *Library Journal, 15*(December), 164-166; *15*(October), 291-292; 297-302. The design and cost of the building also provoked local controversy and ultimately a mayoral investigation (see Whitehill, *Boston Public Library*, 152-158). Whitehill also discusses the 1896 controversy over the sculpture "Bacchante and Child," which was presented to the library by architect Charles Follen McKim.

6 Soule, C. C. (1892). Boston Public Library. *Library Journal, 17*(February), 54-55; Soule, C. C. (1892). The Boston Public Library. *Library Journal, 17*(March), 88-94; Soule, C. C. (1892). The Boston Public Library-III. *Library Journal, 17*(April), 124-125; Soule, C. C. (1892). The Boston Public Library. *Library Journal, 17*(October), 425-426. The trustees had since about 1890 been adding heavily to the library's scholarly collections rather than concentrating on works of "common interest" (see Whitehill, pp. 123-124).

7 C. B. Tillinghast to Dr. Benton, personal communication, 18 January 1895, Herbert Putnam Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress (hereafter Putnam Papers, LC). For the profession's reaction to the appointment, see *Library Journal, 20*(February 1895), 43.

8 *Library Journal, 20*(June 1895), 197-198; *Boston Daily Globe*, 6 February, 14 March 1895. Librarians nevertheless continued to criticize the building—e.g., see *Library Journal, 21*(July 1896), 333, for a summary of William I. Fletcher's "Boston Public Library" published in *The Critic*, June 27, 1896.

9 Putnam's letters (Putnam Papers, LC) reveal that his self-possessed public manner covered severe self-criticism. His appointment to the Minneapolis directorship at a very young age almost certainly made such self-assurance a necessity.

10 Boston Public Library Records of the Corporation, 5 February, 16 April 1895, Rare Books and Manuscripts Department, Boston Public Library (hereafter BPL Records); Belden, Charles F. D. (1929). The Library Service of Herbert Putnam in Boston. In William Warner Bishop & Andrew Keogh (Eds.), *Essays offered to Herbert Putnam by his colleagues and friends on his thirtieth anniversary as Librarian of Congress, 5 April 1929* (pp. 10-14). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

11 By-laws of the trustees, adopted 3 December 1895, Rare Books and Manuscripts Department, Boston Public Library.

12 *Annual Report of the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston, 1895*. Boston:

Rockwell and Churchill, City Printers, hereafter *Annual Report*, pp. 35-36.

[13] We would today call the Issue Department the Circulation Department.

[14] *Annual Report, 1895*, p. 50; Whitehill, *Boston Public Library*, p. 167.

[15] Winsor had wanted to establish a similar service but had no available space (see Whitehill, *Boston Public Library*, p. 146). The Juvenile Room was part of the original plans for the new building (see Belden, Library Service, p. 11).

[16] Putnam, Herbert. (1896). The Public Library and the Common School. *The Congregationalist, 81*(13 August), 214-215.

[17] Quoted in Whitehill, *Boston Public Library*, p. 175 (for the Examining Committee report, see *Annual Report, 1895*, p. 45).

[18] No new branch libraries had been established since 1880.

[19] *Annual Report, 1896*, p. 46.

[20] *Annual Report, 1895*, pp. 32-33; *1898*, p. 57.

[21] Putnam had a volunteer committee read and report on new fiction, but he recommended fewer than 200 new titles each year, and he made it clear that the librarian and trustees, not the volunteers, made the selections. After his departure, and before the selection of an Acting Librarian, two library employees protested the policy on fiction purchases. It is unclear whether the conservative selection they criticized was Putnam's policy or the trustees' decisions on fiction purchases after his departure. Putnam, however, was strict about the selection of titles for the general public, vetoing books that he considered in poor taste. Like most librarians of the 1890s, he sequestered salacious titles and possibly also controversial political literature. (see Evelyn Geller. [1984]. *Forbidden Books in American Public Libraries, 1876-1939: A Study in Cultural Change*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, pp. 61-66.)

[22] *Annual Report, 1897*, pp. 42-43; *1898*, p. 57; *1899*, p. 78.

[23] These statistics should be distinguished from those of earlier reports since Putnam published only home use figures while earlier reports had taken into account the use of books within the library building.

[24] By 1898 this proportion had decreased by nearly 10 percent.

[25] *Annual Report, 1898*, p. 38. Putnam and James Whitney, the head cataloger, attended the London meeting. Putnam was an official U.S. delegate, along with Justin Winsor and Melville Dewey.

[26] *Library Journal, 21*(October 1896), 440; *22*(October 1897), C81.

[27] In fact, the original building plans did not include an office for the librarian—an interesting indicator of the trustees' contempt for the profession (see Whitehill, *Boston Public Library*, p. 145).

[28] *Annual Report, 1898*, pp. 19-20.

[29] *Annual Report, 1898*, p. 21. The sale of the building was mandated, and the return of the fine money was the result of an 1898 city ordinance.

[30] For the circumstances surrounding the appointment, see Rosenberg, Jane Aikin. (1993). *The Nation's Great Library: Herbert Putnam and the Library of Congress, 1899-1939*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, pp. 19-22.

[31] BPL Records, 21, 24 March 1899.

[32] Putnam, Herbert. (1895). The great libraries of the United States. *Forum, 19*(June), 491-492.

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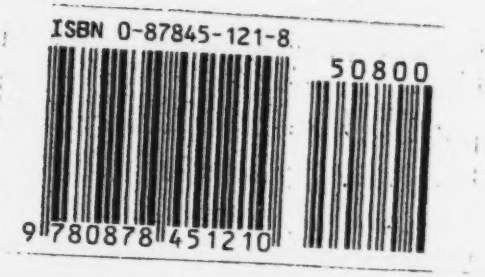

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